

Triage and diversion to prevent family homelessness



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Overview



- ⌘ History/Evolution
- ⌘ Family System Design
- ⌘ Housing First Approach
- ⌘ “Front door” philosophy
- ⌘ Triage and diversion
- ⌘ Outcomes measurement
- ⌘ Critical success factors
- ⌘ Challenges

Evolution of Family System



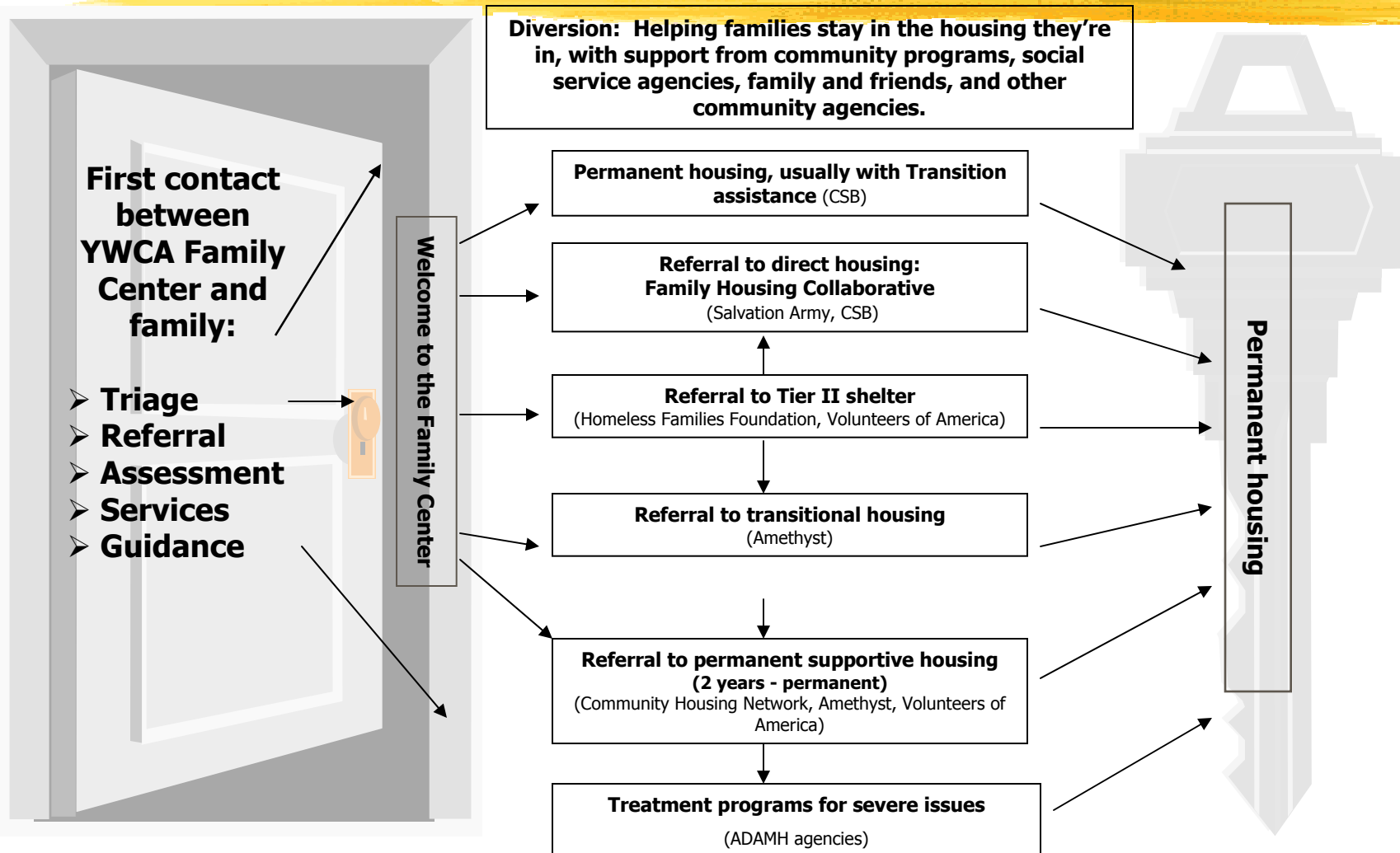
- ⌘ Early 80's – No organized system to serve homeless families
- ⌘ Mid-80's – Faith Community Response
- ⌘ Late 80's - Several shelters with independent criteria and accessibility
- ⌘ Early 90's – Interfaith Hospitality Network
 - ⌘ Overnight shelter in in congregations
 - ⌘ Housing Placement and Case Management provided by another agency during the day
- ⌘ Late 90's – YWCA took over 24/7 management: front door created
- ⌘ 2005 – YWCA Family Center opened

Current Family System Design



- ⌘ Community Shelter Board
- ⌘ “Front Door” Shelter
- ⌘ Tier II Shelter
- ⌘ Transitional Housing
- ⌘ Family Housing Collaborative
- ⌘ Permanent Supportive Housing

Franklin County Family System



System Design Characteristics



- ⌘ Extensive housing partnerships, including subsidized housing
- ⌘ Access to short-term rental assistance
- ⌘ Highly collaborative
 - ☑ Regular system meetings
 - ☑ MOA's among agencies
 - ☑ Shared resources

System Design Characteristics (cont.)



⌘ High accountability among shelters due to transparency

- ☑ Shared HMIS

- ☑ Daily bedlist

- ☑ Quarterly indicators

- ☑ Annual program evaluations

- ☑ Weekly/monthly coordination meetings – systemic approach to “staffing” hard-to-place families

System Framework



- ⌘ Prevention
- ⌘ Diversion
- ⌘ Minimize shelter stay
- ⌘ Move to appropriate housing quickly
- ⌘ Create permanent supportive housing
- ⌘ Measures results and manage for outcomes

Housing 1st Philosophy



⌘ Housing 1st = Priority is housing placement with services available (voluntary)

☑ Unlike Housing 1st approaches for single adults, additional consideration must be given to ensure safety for children

☑ Not “housing only”

⌘ Housing 2nd = Priority is treatment/rehab (services required) with housing upon completion

YWCA Family Center

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MOODY•NOLAN, INC.
FORMS OF INTEGRITY



YWCA Family Center & Child Care Facility
Exterior Perspective



YWCA Family Center Mission



The YWCA Family Center seeks to reduce the impact of homelessness on children and families through prevention, assessment, intervention, and referral services.

Front Door Shelter



- ⌘ Single point of access to family system – 24/7 access.
- ⌘ Toll-free number answered by a human
- ⌘ Primary goal – help families discover alternatives to shelter
- ⌘ Safety first
- ⌘ No stone left unturned

Triage and diversion



- ⌘ Shelter as the last resort
- ⌘ Need to help families understand the impact a shelter stay can have on their lives
- ⌘ Maintain current housing and connect to community resources
- ⌘ Negotiate and advocate – with family members, with landlords, with utilities, etc.
- ⌘ Delaying a shelter stay while connecting to community resources can minimize impact of homelessness
- ⌘ Staff need to be trained, empowered
- ⌘ The “tool” is critical to success

Front Door Shelter Results



Reduces homelessness

- 40-50% of contacts don't need to come to shelter
- Impact on daily census (before/after front door)

Successful in re-housing within short time

- 70% families sheltered move to next step housing
- Average length of stay = under 20 days
- No maximum LOS – monitor progress

Achieves long-term success

- Recidivism < 1%

Critical Success Factors



- ⌘ Comprehensive knowledge of community resources
- ⌘ Qualifications and characteristics of staff (you get what you pay for...)
- ⌘ Ongoing training
- ⌘ Respond to environmental changes – know the social service landscape

Relationships



- ☒ Department of Job and Family Services
- ☒ Legal Aid
- ☒ Faith Community
- ☒ PHA and other landlords
- ☒ Public School District Homeless Liaison
- ☒ Children's Services

Family System Successes



⌘ Seamless system for families

- ☑ Single point of access
- ☑ Clear admission practices
- ☑ Continuity of services

⌘ Shared values & shared goals

- ☑ Value unique role for each
- ☑ 100% commitment to housing outcomes as primary purpose
- ☑ 100% commitment to increasing community resources for families

Family System Successes



- ⌘ Problem solve well both outside and within the shelter system
 - ☑ Partnership with Columbus Public Schools has significantly reduced school mobility
 - ☑ New demonstration program provides wrap around services for children with severe needs (Project Extending Hope)
 - ☑ Childcare and after school programming critical components to ensuring parents' success

Family System Successes



⌘ Responsive & nimble to changes

- ☑ Demand for shelter fluctuations

- ☑ Created replacement program upon 90 days notice of family shelter closing

⌘ Generally high trust among agencies and CSB

Challenges



- ⌘ Declining availability of financial aid to prevent homelessness (difficulty measuring results)
- ⌘ Lower employment rates; lower “employability”
- ⌘ Declining household incomes
- ⌘ Families with multiple episodes and/or long-term homelessness
- ⌘ Few options for large families
- ⌘ Special needs of immigrant populations
- ⌘ Shelter system as relocation tool

Wish List



- ⌘ Easily accessible “flex” fund for unusual needs
- ⌘ More community prevention resources
- ⌘ Better paying jobs, quality education, and better community supports for families
- ⌘ Stronger network of services for secondary migrants



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